

Protests at Playhouse Theatre



There was a protest around 7 o'clock this evening outside The Playhouse Theatre where approximately 30 police officers were engaged in ensuring that the assembled group of around 150 people remained peaceful.



Tonight the Batsheva Dance Company is performing 'Hora' as part of Edinburgh International Festival. The protesters were opposed to the performance as they believe that this dance company participates in what they call 'Brand Israel' which in their view promotes Israeli culture through the arts.

They feel that this whitewashes Israel's many human rights abuses and violations of international law and they do not think that the dance company should do so despite the Israeli Foreign Ministry apparently describing the dance company as 'the best global ambassadors' for Israel.

We spoke to one of their number who had a megaphone and was trying to dissuade people from going into the theatre:-

[listen to 'Protests against Israeli Dance Group' on Audioboo](#)

As well as the protesters, we also met a representative from an opposing group, Gary Sakol, who is the Deputy Director of the Zionist Federation of Great Britain, whose motto is "Bringing you closer to Israel". This group believes that 'Culture Unites and Boycotts Divide', and they would like to see a bridge of culture built so that both sides of the dialogue are heard.

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We also met Councillor Stefan Tymkewycz who was happy to share

his view on the protest with us:-

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The Edinburgh International Festival programme says that "*Hora* is a thrilling spectacle of movement, an emotional rollercoaster that successfully highlights – in a company that deliberately works without soloists – the uniqueness of each one of the dancers. Set against a stark, luminous green background, the dancers' athleticism, technique and energy take centre stage."

